

MERCER UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
MACON, GA. THE

THIRTIETH ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

UNITY

BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

HELD AT

Bethlehem, Jasper Co., Ga.,

SEPTEMBER 2, 3, AND 4, 1876.

OFFICERS:

JOEL LANE.....

Moderator.

G. L. LOWBY.....

Clerk.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA:

JAS. P. HARRISON & Co. PRINTERS AND BINDERS.

1876.

MINUTES.

BETHLEHEM, Jasper county, Ga., September 2, 1876.

The United Baptist Association met at Bethlehem, Jasper county, Ga., on the 2d, 3d and 4th of September, 1876.

The Introductory Sermon was preached by Rev. J. I. Weaver, from John xix chapter, middle clause 30th verse: "It is finished."

The Association was then organized by choice of Joel Lane, as Moderator and G. L. Lowry, Clerk.

1. Invited visiting brethren and sisters to seats with us.

2. Called for correspondence.

3. Called for petitionary letters.

4. Called for delegates, and received from—

Bethlehem, Jasper county—W. R. White, A. B. White and Benager Hardy.

Corinth, Butts county—Wm. L. Weaver, J. I. Weaver and Wesley Ivey.

Nazareth, Pike county—James Weaver and J. C. Wood.

Union Grove, Franklin county—W. F. Wheeler, and J. W. McFarlan.

5. Appointed committees as follows:

On Preaching—Benager Hardy, Wesley Ivey, W. F. Wheeler, Jas. Weaver,

On Sabbath-schools—W. P. White, W. L. Weaver, J. C. Wood.

On Arrangement—W. P. Hardy, J. I. Weaver, J. W. McFarlan, James Weaver, A. B. White.

On Obituaries—J. W. McFarlan and W. P. White.

The Association then adjourned until Monday morning, 8:30 o'clock.

SUNDAY SERVICES.

The brethren selected to preach on Sabbath, came forward in the order of their names, and addressed a large and attentive audience, we hope to the good of sinners and the edification of saints.

SECOND DAY.

MONDAY MORNING, September 4—8:30 o'clock.

The Association met according to adjournment.

Prayer by brother McFarlan.

The Association was then announced ready for business.

The Committee on Sabbath-schools report: That the interest in this good work is not so great as it should be, and recommend a regular system of Sabbath-school teaching, and that there should be an effort made to procure for each school a suitable library—G. L. Lowry appointed to act as agent and Sabbath-school lecturer, with the privilege of appointing some one to assist. God grant that at the next session of this Association we may from each church receive a cheering report of a flourishing Sabbath-school.

Report from the Committee on Business received and adopted:

Resolved 1. That we take Old and New Testaments as the Word of God and the only rule of faith and practice, to the exclusion of all human creeds or books of discipline.

Resolved 2. That this Association disclaims any right or authority whatever to lord it over the churches, but only to act as an advisory council.

Resolved 3. We, your committee, are glad to report that the churches have generally adopted the practice of feet washing.

Resolved 4. Your Business Committee admonish the brethren to keep up a regular correspondence among the churches.

Resolved 5. That when we meet to commemorate the death and sufferings of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that as we read from the Word of God, and taking that only as the test and standard, all who by that test are accounted worthy, are invited to commune with us.

Resolved 6. That we insert in these minutes the "Reasons why we are United Baptists."

Obituaries.

The Committee on Obituaries reported three, who were members of this body, that, within the present year, have been called from earth to, we trust, a better land.

Mrs. Susanna Addison was born August 28, 1802; died May 27, 1876. She had none of those doubts which are often found with those on a death-bed; none of those fears and misgivings of conscience which the unstable and careless Christian often experiences. Her ambition had been to obtain that honor which cometh from God, and she died with confident hope of receiving the crown laid up for the righteous. She was a member of Union Grove church, Franklin county. That community has indeed lost a mother in Israel.

Mrs. Elvira Paine, aged 28. Also a member of the same church. Often doubts of her worthiness would almost overcome her, knowing that no merit of hers could make her the object of God's distinguishing grace. But she believed the Word of God, and was enabled at an early age to offer up prayers to Him, that He would open the eyes of her understanding and lead her to a knowledge of His truth. And we feel sure that His promise was fulfilled to her, (as it is to every serious inquirer)—"Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find."

Stephen Nolly, (colored,) long a consistent member of Bethlehem church. When most of his own race forsook the church of the whites and formed assemblies of their own, he remained steadfast. He lived to all appearance a true and most devout Christian, and died in the full triumphs of a blessed immortality; his only regrets being, that he had not discharged all his Christian duties and performed all the good he might have done.

Appointed W. L. Weaver and J. L. Weaver to serve as missionaries for at least three months—the result of labors, pay received, etc., to be reported to the Clerk of the Association.

Appointed Union Meetings as follows:

Nazareth, commencing Saturday before the fourth Sabbath in April.

Corinth, Saturday before the second Sabbath in June.

Bethlehem, Saturday before the first Sabbath in July.

Union Grove, Saturday before the third Sabbath in August.

The next session of this body to be held with the church at Union Grove, Franklin county, commencing Saturday before the second Sabbath in October, 1877. T. J. Leverett to preach the next Introductory Sermon; W. L. Weaver, alternate; G. L. Lowry to write the next circular letter.

Resolved, That the Association returns thanks to the citizens of the community for their uniform kindness and generous hospitality.

G. L. LOWRY, Clerk.

JOEL LANE, Moderator.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

To the Churches composing the United Baptist Association—Greeting:
 "Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Without formality we desire to present for your prayerful consideration three subjects which we feel vitally interests the church just now.

The first of these is the want of brotherly love amongst the members.

Second, the too great love of the world and its vain show, and a tawdry alliance with the same, which serves in a great measure to exclude brotherly love from amongst you.

And third, the fault of the church in allowing many to remain as members, who are not only useless drones, but positive stumbling blocks in the way of others.

In regard to the first. We cannot help but feel and see that there is not enough of brotherly love, for brethren meet each other as men of the world—their salutation as formal, their manners toward each other as cold, and, instead of being helpers of each other, each one pulling away his shoulder from the burden of his brother, seeming to care solely for his own individual concerns; not only so, but often trying to sustain himself in the world at the expense of others. There should be a waking up of the church upon this important subject, and a strong and prayerful effort at reform. Since the world will love its own, you should love and help each other, enquiring and knowing each others temporal and spiritual needs, and ministering thereto, as occasion and circumstances may require. Not only should you help each other, but as much as in you lies, helping others of any name, banishing that soul-starving expression and policy of "my church," or "my order;" for there is one church, and that is Christ's, and one order, that is the Christian.

And to the consideration of the second: We know one great reason for the dearth of love in the churches, is the love of the world; the desire of show and dress, thereby incurring expenses and debts, that tend to make you servants of the world, when you should be servants of your Heavenly Father. This is a time of great temporal distress, and will be for a few years to come, and requires the strictest economy in personal expenditures. There is, perhaps, no other one thing that so much diminishes the Christian's influence in the world than in allowing himself to become so involved that he cannot regulate his affairs according to his engagements. Whosoever you render yourselves servants to be, his servants ye are; if you render yourselves to the world, ye are the servants of the world; rather give yourselves to God and His service, knowing that we are sojourners here but for a day, and that this is not our abiding place. You have been bought with a price, and what you are and have belong to Christ. Esteem it not lightly to be the servants of God.

And now, thirdly, and to a subject that merits your immediate attention: There are many whose names are upon your books, but whose manner of life does not conform to their profession. These should be looked after. Some are nominal professors who have never yet borne any fruits; some may have been disorderly. You should exhort these to a reform and a prompt attendance upon their duties, and if they persistently refuse, separate them from amongst you; if ye stand few in number, let those, at least, be what they profess to be.

Do your duty, and leave the rest to Christ. He will not see His Church utterly overthrown.

And those that claim connection with you, and their actions show them to be not of God, but of the world, although they swell the number of names, will do you more harm than good; for they not only injure themselves, but bring a stigma upon the good name of those with whom they are connected.

And now, in conclusion, brethren, we would exhort you to faithfulness and purity, condemning all who would reproach you, and, exercising patience, perform your duty without murmuring; using charity toward all men; laying no

MINUTES.

stumbling-block in the way of others, that in the final day you may be accounted worthy to be received into the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honor forever and ever. Amen.

SCALE OF THE CHURCHES.

CHURCHES.	Counties.	Time of Meeting.	Pastors.
Bethlehem.....	Jasper.....	First Sabbath.....	T. J. Leverett.
Corinth.....	Butts.....	Second Sabbath.....	W. L. Weaver.
Union Grove.....	Franklin.....	Third Sabbath.....	J. W. McFarlan, assist'd by W. L. McKay.
Nazareth.....	Pike.....	Fourth Sabbath.....	W. L. Weaver.

MINISTERS NAMES AND POST-OFFICES.

NAMES.	POST-OFFICE.	NAMES.	POST-OFFICE.
W. L. Weaver.....	Milner	T. J. Leverett.....	Stark
J. W. McFarlan.....	Toccoa City	J. A. Turner.....	Sand Town
W. L. McKay.....	Toccoa City	J. C. Wood*.....	Zebulon
J. I. Weaver.....	Jackson	J. R. Norris*.....	Stark

Those marked thus* are Licentates.

REASONS WHY WE ARE UNITED BAPTISTS.

We do not offer our reasons for being United Baptists as an apology for the existence of the denomination, nor as supplication to be permitted to exist.

We are not United Baptists from love of sect or name; neither are we such from education, association, or love of renown among men, but because fidelity to the Gospel of Christ obliges us to occupy this church relationship. In the sects, there are many inducements to seek a home with them, but at the threshold of every one of them we are required to avow belief in doctrines, creeds, or principles, which we can never do without sacrificing our fidelity to Christ. Christianity has once been nearly obliterated from the earth by proclamation of error by some, and a friendly, union-loving subscription to it by others, and we have no security against a similar, and even a worse, apostasy, if we are indifferent to the truth, and support and build up churches where we feel at home. Their creeds are full of doctrines which Jesus and His apostles never taught. Every Christian is bound to give to rising generations a pure gospel and a pure church.

But, if we feel at home, and consent to stand in a church where the doctrines of men are taught as the truth of Christ, we are untrue to duty, commend all corruptions of Christians, and open the doors to still further perversions, and endorse a principle which, being carried out, will overthrow the whole Christian system. If we consent to one perversion, we cannot object if our neighbor advocates a score of them; we endorse the principle he carries out in practice. The growth of error is like the breaking out of water, a little stream to a mighty breach, and the whole dyke is soon gone. In the dominant sects around us there are very many excellent persons, but there are also growing errors to which we cannot directly or indirectly subscribe without a sacrifice of honesty and obligation. In the first place they deny us the privilege of being guided alone by the word of God in matters of religion, and offer a creed, and demand our subscription to that as the rule of faith and practice. We put no decree of council between us and the Gospel. We take the Bible for our law, the Holy Spirit for our guide. This is our reason for being United Baptists. It is evident from the facts before us, that God's children be one in mind and judgment, perfectly joined together, all speaking and teaching the same things, that there be no divisions among them, in order that the world may be converted. We should bend all our energies to this great end. Those who fail to labor to accomplish this union, have no promise of salvation in the Scriptures, for Christ prayed that His children might be one, as He and His Father are one. While many saying, Lo! here, and Lo! there, holding up creeds, articles of faith, which have torn assunder the Church of Christ, in view of which the law of the spirit says to "Mark them which cause divisions in the Church of Christ." The Scriptures are given for our instruction; Christ prays for it, the Bible teaches it, Christians love to enjoy it. Now true and genuine Christianity is a unit, and always will be until that is finally swallowed up in heaven by love. Why not cultivate union, when all say, "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism?" One Lord whom we all delight to adore.

Let men of all sects join and say, peace and good will on earth. Then we believe we shall see love, joy and peace meet and rejoice in anticipation of the undying glories of heaven. Oh! see the brotherhood meet each other and greet in glory, and say, "How sweet this union—all bathing in the ocean of God's eternal love."

Brethren, rally around the Cross of Christ, and pray that God's children may be one in love in union, is our prayer.

W. L. WEAVER.